



Kentucky Personnel Cabinet Office of the Secretary

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State health plan debuts telehealth option

LiveHealth Online offered at no cost to Kentucky Employees' Health Plan members

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 3, 2015) – For more than 265,000 Kentucky state employees, teachers and retirees, seeing a physician online is now just a click away.

The Personnel Cabinet's Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP) made a telehealth service, LiveHealth Online, available to its members June 1. For the remainder of 2015, the service is available at no cost to members.

LiveHealth Online can be accessed online using a computer, smartphone or tablet with video capabilities. Physicians can be accessed at any time of day, 365 days a year and from nearly everywhere in the U.S.

"LiveHealth Online offers an innovative solution that removes the typical barriers of cost, travel and access to quality care," said Personnel Cabinet Secretary Tim Longmeyer.

LiveHealth Online is a way to have secure and private video chats with board certified physicians. Members and their eligible plan dependents can get help with colds, the flu, allergies and fevers. In the event that medications are needed, the physician can send prescriptions to a member's local pharmacy.

LiveHealth Online is not meant to replace the member's primary care physician; however, it is a convenient option for care in non-emergency situations or if a physician is unavailable.

"Imagine the new parents whose child wakes up at 2 a.m. screaming with a fever," said Joe Cowles, commissioner of the Department of Employee Insurance who administers the KEHP. "The local retail clinic and urgent care centers are closed. It's not an emergency, so you don't want to drive and wait at the ER. With LiveHealth Online there is another choice. Members don't have to worry with waiting or even leaving the house to get care for their sick child."

Physicians seeing patients via LiveHealth Online support local practitioners and pharmacies by referring serious conditions and follow-up visits. Patients can get a LiveHealth Online visit summary to print, email or fax to their primary physician.

LiveHealth Online is made available to KEHP members through Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the plan's third-party medical administrator. Physicians who respond to LiveHealth Online live visits are in-network for Anthem.

The introductory cost for KEHP members is zero; however, Anthem makes the service available to everyone at \$49 per visit. The flat fee is lower than national averages for a typical physician's office visit, which costs a health plan around \$112 and is substantially less costly than a \$1,400 emergency room visit.

"At the KEHP we're continuously seeking innovative ways to reduce health care costs, while better serving members," said Cowles. "The potential savings LiveHealth Online can generate for the health plan is one of the leading reasons we're offering it for free the remainder of the year."

One LiveHealth Online study shows members can also save up to \$89 per visit. Savings are weighted in comparison to costs and avoidable costs from emergency room, urgent care, primary care and retail clinic visits.

According to LiveHealth Online's current utilization, the top diagnosis is for acute sinusitis. The average age of a LiveHealth Online customer is 40-64 years of age.

Post-visit surveys from patients indicate 90 percent were satisfied, 85 percent had their medical issue completely resolved, and 90 percent said they saved time by using the service. The average time savings was two to three hours with each visit, and 21 percent utilized mobile options rather than a desktop computer.

"LiveHealth Online means Kentucky's school teachers and state employees can see a doctor at any time," said Cowles. "Time is valuable, and juggling work and family for many employees is a daily challenge. Using valuable leave time to travel and wait for medical care can be reduced by using LiveHealth Online."

The LiveHealth Online app is available on both Apple and Android mobile devices. KEHP members can enjoy the easy-to-use system in three quick steps: sign up online, choose a physician and begin face-to-face consultation within minutes.

Learn more about LiveHealth Online by visiting [LiveHealthOnline.com](https://livehealthonline.com). Information is also available at [Anthem.com/KEHP](https://anthem.com/KEHP) or the Personnel Cabinet website at <https://personnel.ky.gov/Pages/livehealth.aspx>.

